

CONSUMER FACT SHEET

Televisions and Converters

What does the term “cable ready” mean? “Cable ready” refers to equipment that incorporates a tuner capable of receiving television signals and an input terminal intended for receiving cable television service. Cable ready consumer electronics equipment is defined by federal regulations to include television receivers, videocassette recorders, and similar devices. Such equipment should be clearly marked “cable ready” or “cable compatible.”

If my TV is cable-ready, can my cable operator require me to have a converter?

Yes. Your cable operator can require you to have a converter to receive its programming. While a converter is not typically necessary in order to receive the basic service tier, it may be necessary for other programming services, such as premium channels (e.g., *HBO* and *Cinemax*), and pay-per-view. The cable operator is allowed to scramble these other programming services in order to protect its signal from theft, and the cable operator’s converter is typically the only legal way these signals can be decoded so that subscribers can watch the programming.

If I want to use my TV or VCR to watch one channel and tape another, do I need a converter?

Since the technology varies from community to community, we recommend that you contact your cable operator to find out about the specific features on your community’s cable system. Some cable systems may not be configured to allow you to view one program while recording another unless you have a converter. In addition, some subscribers may need a converter in order to utilize enhanced capabilities, such as taping, picture-in-picture, channel review, advanced picture generation and other display features.

May I purchase my own remote control and use it with the cable operator’s converter?

Yes. Cable operators are required to permit subscribers to purchase and use commercially available remote control units. Furthermore, subscribers who want to use commercially available remote control units can ask the cable operator to disable the remote control functions on their converter. Subscribers may want to contact the cable operator prior to purchasing a commercial remote control to ensure it is compatible with the cable operator’s equipment.

Am I responsible for the cable operator’s converter?

Yes. Cable operators may require that subscribers assume responsibility for the converter, meaning that if the converter is damaged or not returned to the cable operator, the subscriber may be held liable for the replacement cost. The cable operator must make you aware of its policy at the time of installation. Typically, the information is listed on the work order that the

cable operator asks you to sign at installation or in the cable operator's policies and procedures handbook. We recommend that subscribers make it a habit to read anything that they sign carefully and keep a copy of any signed documents until the cable subscription is closed and the subscriber is satisfied that the final bill is correct. Cable operators are also required to give subscribers annual notice of its billing policies and procedures. Subscribers are strongly encouraged to review this annual update to ensure that they are informed of any changes.

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